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The *Hindutva* View of History
Rewriting Textbooks in India and the United States

Kamala Visweswaran, Michael Witzel, Nandini Manjrekar, Dipta Bhog, and Uma Chakravarti

When Hindu nationalist (or *Sangh Parivar*) organizations in India came to power at the national level in 1998, one of the first things they did was to establish a National Curriculum Framework (NCF) to change textbook content. The 2000 NCF curriculum debate reflected the intense conflict between competing visions of national identity that had dominated India's public and political discourse over the previous two decades. In a significant departure from earlier curriculum frameworks of 1972 and 1986, which stressed democratic values, social justice, and national integration through appreciation of the commonalities of different subcultures, the principal focus of the NCF was "value education."[1] The chief end of history, as of education as a whole, was presented as the development of a "national spirit" and "national consciousness" through generating pride in the younger generation regarding India's past and its unique "religio-philosophical ethos, which was presented as primarily Hindu."[2] These actions were vociferously challenged by academics and progressive, secular, liberal, and left groups who decried the *Sangh Parivar*'s ideological efforts to recast history.

In the summer and fall months of 2005, U.S. "Hindu" organizations with *Sangh* ties protested the California Board of Education, claiming that California textbooks discriminated against Hindus and presented a demeaning image of Hinduism. While there were indeed problems with the representation of Hinduism in the textbooks, the overall aim of the changes proposed by the Hindu Education Foundation and the Vedic Foundation was to propagate false notions of Indian history, such as that "Aryans" were the original or indigenous inhabitants of India, and that the core essence of Hinduism can be found in the Vedic religion of the Aryans.

We will argue that these textbook edits attempt to manufacture a majoritarian view of society in which the cultural and political space for minorities will progressively shrink. The ongoing violence against Muslims in Gujarat, where the *Sangh Parivar's* political arm, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) first came into office in the mid-1990s, and elsewhere in India, suggests that such a curriculum creates a setting in which social intolerance and injustices against minorities can be justified. U.S. legislators, policy-makers, and educators must therefore be particularly vigilant about the transplantation of this ideology to the United States in a post-9/11 climate.[3]

Sangh Parivar in India and the United States

Sangh Parivar refers to the family of Hindu nationalist organizations created beginning in 1926 with the founding of the National Volunteers Organization or *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS). The cultural and religious branch of the movement, the World Hindu Council, or *Vishwa Hindu Parishad*, was founded in 1964. The political arm of the movement was founded as the *Jana Sangh* in 1956, but reorganized as the Indian People's Party or Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1980. Members of *Sangh Parivar*-related organizations have been indicted in numerous incidents of mass violence against Christian and Muslim minorities in India and a former RSS member assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in 1948.[4] The *Sangh Parivar* is increasingly attempting to present a more benign face through charity and educational

work, and has set up several partner organizations in the United States, among them the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (founded in 1976 and now headquartered in Iselin, New Jersey), the *Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh* (founded about 1980 and headquartered in Rockaway, New Jersey) and the Overseas Friends of the BJP (headquartered in Edison, New Jersey).[5]

In 1998, the BJP came to power at the national level and, for the second time, in Gujarat, where RSS-affiliated chief ministers have held power for much of the past decade. The *Sangh* rise to power in Gujarat and at the national level resulted in two things: first, the discriminatory or unequal application of law to target Muslim and Christian groups; and, second, the systematic revision of textbooks at the national and state level.[6] While the BJP has often distanced itself from the violence and more extreme positions of its fellow *Sangh Parivar* organizations, and a number of scholars and political observers consider the BJP to be a moderate force in Indian politics, an analysis of its role in textbook revisions in India shows that it firmly subscribes to the basic tenets of Hindu nationalist ideology and its revisionist view of history.

The systematic rewriting of history is a critical component of Hindu nationalist ideology. Its guiding concept, *Hindutva* ("Hinduness") calls for India's former untouchables, Christians, and Muslims to be assimilated, expelled, or annihilated so that a Hindu majority nation is transformed into an exclusively Hindu nation.[7] To do so requires the construction of a history that renders India as "Hindu," and collapses the distinction between history and religious myth. *Hindutva* history describes Christians and Muslims as "foreigners" and portrays medieval India as a period of Muslim despotism and decline.

When the BJP first came to power in 1998, *Sangh* sympathizers were placed on the National Council for Education and Research Training (NCERT), the school curriculum development and review body at the national level. Over the next several years, NCERT introduced changes to the school curricula in alignment with the *Sangh*'s agenda.[8] States with BJP governments implemented these and other changes. In 2001, Goa's BJP chief minister, Manohar Parrikar, turned management of fifty-one government primary schools in rural areas to the Vidya Bharati Educational Trust—the *Sangh Parivar*'s educational wing. With the defeat of the BJP at the national level in 2004, some of these textbook changes have been reversed. But, ironically, some of the same changes that were in the process of being revised in India were being attempted for the first time in the United States. Below we summarize the efforts to rewrite Indian history in India and the United States.

The *Hindutva* Rewriting of Textbooks in India

While many of India's textbooks have been of poor quality and contained factually incorrect information or negative stereotypes, the systematic rewriting of history is a critical component of Hindu nationalist ideology. For many decades, the grassroots organizations and educational institutions run by the RSS—the *Saraswati Shishu Mandirs* and *Vidya Bharati* primary and secondary schools—have sought to spread a Hindu-centric version of Indian history. For example, "some books for elementary school students portrayed all communities other than the Hindus as foreigners in India…These books, in the name of instilling patriotism and valor among Indians, spread falsehoods, treat mythological religious figures like actual historical figures and make absurd claims such as that the struggle for India's freedom became a 'religious war' against Muslims."[9] The United States Department of State's International Religious Freedom reports of 2002, 2003, and 2004 describe the *Sangh* efforts to revise curriculum in India as threats to religious freedom.[10]

The curriculum designed by the NCF in 2000 and the textbooks published a year later also interchanged the roles assigned to science and spirituality. The earlier emphasis on science—seen as essential to the creation of a rational, modern, and enlightened society—was supplanted in the new framework by the idea of a unique and distinctive "Indian tradition" based on formulaic notions of spirituality and religion and a conservative social bias. The new framework was severely criticized for violating the constitutional commitment to secularism by advocating the idea of religion-based value education as a crucial factor in the syllabi. Value education, however, was integral to the NCF's plan, its main plank to launch the spiritual and moral renewal of India. It was only through learning of the "lives of prophets, saints and the sacred texts" that children could achieve higher SQs (Spiritual Quotients) and EQs (Emotional Quotients).[11]

While the implementation of the NCF curriculum on a national level was stayed by the Supreme Court on 1 March 2002 on the ground that the NCF had not sought the mandatory approval of the Central Advisory Board of Education, states with BJP governments were already implementing changes to social science and history textbooks that followed the broad guidelines of the NCF 2000 curriculum.

The BJP government in Gujarat was one of the first to revise its textbooks with a decidedly Hindu nationalist frame. The first book in the revised series, the social science textbook for class eight focuses on the most radical and nationalistic elements of the movement against British colonial rule, carrying images of several of the movement's most militant leaders on its cover. Recent editions of the Gujarat social studies books suggest a close association between terrorism and Muslim identity, including prejudicial statements such as: "Gujarat is a border state. Its land and sea boundaries touch the boundaries of Pakistan which is like a den of terrorism. Under such circumstances, it is absolutely necessary for us to understand the effects of terrorism and the role of citizens in the fight against it."[12]

History textbooks in Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh regularly conflate myth and historical fact. The Dandi Salt March led by Gandhi in 1931, a high point in the nationalist struggle, for example, is conflated with Lord Ram's mythical progress to Panchvati. Such comparisons have the effect of sacralizing an important event in secular nationalism while attaching a historical dateline to mythic events.[13] The Gujarat State fifth grade social studies textbook has nine stories on mythology masquerading as history.[14]

The *Hindutva* movement also has historic links to Italian and German forms of fascism from the 1920s and 1930s, and another form of textbook revision can be seen in its treatment of fascism.[15] Prashant, an NGO based in Ahmedabad and lead by Jesuits, undertook an analysis of Gujarati class nine textbooks in 2005 and found several distortions and omissions on this count: "There is no mention of Hitler's role in the concentration camps, the holocaust and the extermination of millions of Jews; in fact, the role of Hitler is seen as always positive."[16] Similarly, the Gujarat state class ten social studies textbooks contained chapters titled "Hitler, the Supremo" and "Internal Achievements of Nazism" where Nazi administrative efficiency is lauded. The Holocaust is not mentioned by name, but "the gruesome and inhuman act of suffocating 60 *lakh* [6 million] Jews in gas chambers" is noted. The section on "Ideology of Nazism" translates Hitler's title of "Fuhrer" as "Savior."[17]

Finally, in the Gujarat textbooks, caste is rendered as a benign social arrangement. Although caste discrimination (casteism) is identified as a "social evil," it is seen as a corruption of *varnashrama*, the Vedic system of four hierarchically ranked classes that forms the basis and justification for the caste system. A 1997

social studies text says, “These distinctions have persisted in spite of the attempts made by reformers to remove them. Yet, the importance of the ‘varna’ system as an ideal system of building the social and economic structure of a society cannot be overlooked.”[18]

States where the BJP has come to power have followed the Gujarat model. Textbooks in the state of Rajasthan, where the BJP became the ruling party in 2003 have been revised to incorporate Hindu nationalist views. Other states where the BJP is in power have pledged to ignore the 2005 National Curriculum framework set by NCERT and to use their own textbooks.[19]

The *Hindutva* Attempt to Rewrite Textbooks in the United States

In India the strategy to rewrite textbooks has come from government branches and agencies controlled by the BJP and its allied organizations, which have relied upon the grassroots network of *Sangh* charities and educational institutions to carry them out. In the United States, the call for rewriting textbooks has apparently come from Hindu parents who feel the books demean or misrepresent Hinduism. The first known case charging anti-Hindu bias in U.S. textbooks occurred in Fairfax County, Virginia in 2004. Scholars from George Mason University and Georgetown University were consulted and, while they found some difficulties with the textbooks, they recommended that the school board adopt them.[20] In September of that same year, however, the Educator’s Society for the Heritage of India (ESHI), which has links to many *Sangh*-affiliated institutions in the United States,[21] held a conference at Rutgers University to plan a strategy for challenging the representation of Hinduism in California, Texas, and Florida state textbooks.[22] The 2004 conference, which included officials from the New Jersey Department of Education, also featured representation from other *Sangh*-affiliated organizations, including a speaker from the Vedic Foundation in Austin, Texas which would play a major role in the California textbook debate. It is evident, then, that the California campaign emerged less as the effort of concerned Hindu parents, and more as the outcome of concerted planning and preparation from Hindu nationalist organizations in the United States. We do not wish to discount the legitimate questions Hindu parents may have about the representation of Hinduism in textbooks, but it is of considerable concern that parents and state education officials may unknowingly be working with *Hindutva*, or *Hindutva*-led organizations.

The California State Board of Education (CBE) reviews educational materials for its core subjects (History/Social Science, Mathematics, Reading/Language Arts, and Science) every six years. In 2005, the history/social science texts were up for evaluation. Over the summer of 2005, the Hindu Education Foundation (HEF) and the Vedic Foundation (VF) of Austin, Texas wrote to the California Department of Education Curriculum alleging that California sixth grade textbooks contained demeaning and stereotypical views of Hindus. As mandated, the CBE makes the proposed textbooks available for public scrutiny and commentary. During public hearings at the end of September 2005, representatives of several Islamic, Jewish, and “Hindu” organizations testified to problematic aspects of the educational materials. The HEF and VF proposed a large number of changes to the textbooks. In the end, some 160 edits were submitted and taken up for review by the California authorities.

In response, the California State Board of Education appointed an ad hoc review panel to vet proposed textbook changes with Dr. Shiva Bajpai, a retired professor at California State University, Northridge, and a member of the World Association for Vedic Studies (WAVES), an organization known for its *Hindutva*

ties.[23] Dr. Bajpai endorsed most of the changes proposed by the HEF and VF, including a number that were historically inaccurate. The most important and contentious of the edits, as in India, was the attempt to say that the earliest and most sophisticated civilization in ancient India, the Indus-valley civilization, was contemporary with Aryan or Vedic civilization—thus claiming the achievements of the former as "Aryan" and, in so doing, ignoring the historical evidence that Aryans had migrated to India from Central Asia. The HEF and VF revisions thus sought to pose the Vedic texts of the Aryans as proof that early Hinduism was the oldest or "indigenous" religion, erasing *adivasi* (aboriginal or "first peoples") histories, and presenting South Asian Christians and Muslims who have lived in India for centuries as "outsiders."

Further, the rewrites to the California curriculum glossed over gender and caste hierarchies in ancient Indian history, excised references to caste and gender inequalities in contemporary India, and deleted the word *Dalit* (former "untouchable" castes) from textbooks altogether. The historically accurate description of women in ancient India as having fewer rights than men was changed to "other rights than men."[24] Perhaps most seriously, the text presented the many varieties of Hinduism as a monolithic, monotheistic religion of "one God: his name is Bhagwan," marginalizing the multiple female and male deities that Hindus worship throughout India.[25] Many of the HEF/VF edits sought to emphasize a Vedic form of Hinduism, which contains a religious justification for the caste system, while at the same time attempting to de-link Hinduism from the caste system and then minimizing or eliminating mention of the effects of caste discrimination upon lower caste and *Dalit* communities.

The edits of VF/HEF as sanctioned by Dr. Bajpai were scheduled for a final vote on 9 November 2005. A few days prior to that vote, though, scholars who had been alerted to the impending politicized edits sent a letter of protest to the CBE signed by forty-seven scholars from around the world, many of them Sanskritists, Indologists or specialists in ancient Indian history.[26] In response, the CBE suspended the ratification process, and appointed a three-member faculty committee consisting of Dr. Michael Witzel (Harvard), Dr. Stanley Wolpert (UCLA), and Dr. James Heitzman (UC Davis) to review the changes. That committee's report, delivered in November, rescinded most of the VF/HEF edits.[27]

The CBE held several public hearings between December 2005 and 8 March 2006, at which a number of U.S. *Sangh*-affiliated groups and others testified. A group of 109 U.S.-based South Asia scholars sent a letter to the CBE on 30 November, urging it to accept the faculty committee's recommendations.[28] However, the *Sangh* organizations put enormous pressure on the commission, and it caved in to what it saw as popular sentiment by accepting most of the VF/HEF edits.

This did not stop the protests against the California edits, however. Another letter sent on 7 December 2005, signed this time by 146 U.S.-based scholars of South Asia expressed concern about the CBE decision[29] and asked it to formally reconsider.[30] In subsequent CBE meetings in January and February, numerous other Indian and South Asian community organizations also testified,[31] contesting the *Hindutva* view of Indian history and a group of South Asia scholars submitted two reports to the CBE detailing flaws in the textbook revisions.[32] This ultimately led the CBE to reverse its initial opinion and abandon most of the HEF/VF changes.

A lawsuit later filed against the CBE by the Hindu American Foundation, a group with links to both the HEF and VF, was ruled invalid on all four major points of contention. In a lengthy, well-reasoned opinion the court called the proposed

changes unscholarly.[33] In the spring of 2006, a new organization of undisclosed membership, California Parents for Equalization of Educational Materials (CAPEEM), launched another case in California Federal Court alleging discrimination against Hindus in California textbooks.[34] This case is still pending and may be resolved in early 2009.

Conclusions

While *Hindutva* as a form of aggressive and militant nationalism is focused on the capture of state power in India, it is less clear what its aims are as a transnational movement, beyond appeals to the U.S. Indian diaspora to support its various projects in India. Why then, should U.S. citizens and residents be concerned about the infiltration of Hindu nationalist ideas in U.S. schools? While the United States appropriately recognizes freedom of expression, regardless of the content of that expression, it cannot condone the teaching of ideas that foster and justify prejudice and intolerance toward minority groups. Textbook revisions in India which have been successfully introduced into the United States deliberately conflate pride in Hinduism with Hindu superiority. As one of the co-authors of this paper has discovered, ideas of Hindu superiority encourage college students in Texas who have absorbed them to be suspicious and intolerant toward Muslims and other Indian minorities in the United States.

The most important area of overlap between the textbook revisions in India and those in California was the ideological effort to make "Aryans" the progenitors of the Indus Valley civilization, thereby establishing them as the *indigenous* originators of a "Hindu" India and rendering Christians and Muslims as "foreigners."

Yet there were also points of divergence in the strategies for rewriting history. Textbooks in Gujarat present the caste system as an achievement of Aryan civilization, while the tendency of *Hindutva* groups in the United States was to erase evidence of the connection between Hinduism and the caste system. We have also seen that the modifications of textbooks in Gujarat resulted in a reformulation of Indian nationalism as an essentially militant one, which conflated Muslims with terrorists and reframed Hitler's legacy as positive, while more generally (and perhaps insidiously) inserting mythic themes and figures into historical accounts.

In California, on the other hand, the textbook revisions focused mostly on the ancient civilizations curricula where the origins of the world's religions are discussed, so the emphasis has been less on introducing religio-mythic figures and more on reifying Brahminical texts such as the Rg Veda as foundational to Hindu and thus Indian identity. Yet the notion that the Vedas define Hinduism also leads to a contradiction in the *Hindutva* strategy of separating the caste system from Hindusim, for it is in the Rg Veda that we find the earliest central evidence and religious justification for the caste system.[35] In dating the origins of Hinduism to the Vedas, California and other U.S. textbooks have unwittingly reinforced the *Hindutva* view that such texts are definitive of Hindusim rather than a part of a vibrant, pluralistic, and constantly changing tradition that has also included challenges to the caste system in the forms of *bhakti* devotional worship.[36]

The California textbook controversy takes on added importance because textbooks adopted in California and Texas tend to set national trends for the adoption of textbooks elsewhere in the United States. The social studies textbooks in Texas, where Houston branches of the VHPA and HSS are extremely active, are now up for review. At the point of textbook review, most states are primarily concerned with whether textbooks meet the state-approved standards, and public participation in the

review process is limited to correction of factual errors. This structural feature in the textbook review process helped stymie *Hindutva* attempts to introduce more broad-based ideological content into California textbooks. After the School Board reversal and the court verdict in California, however, Hindu nationalist organizations appear to have changed their strategy. Most states allow school districts to supplement their textbooks with additional materials. In California and Texas, Hindu nationalist organizations have made supplemental materials freely available to interested teachers.

For example, online "educational" materials from the ESHI website present exaggerated and unsubstantiated claims about Indian history and Hinduism that are in line with the changes made to textbooks in India. One slide, for example, renames the "Khyber Pass" in present day Afghanistan as the "Pass in the Himalayas for Foreign Invaders! Greeks, Muslims, Europeans," but of course neglects to mention that Aryans also entered India through the same Khyber Pass. Still another slide announces "NASA images of Rama's bridge!" showing an image of Rama and Sita from the Ramayana counterposed with an old aerial photograph purporting to show the ruins of an underwater bridge between the "Tip of India" and Sri Lanka.[37]

Such assertions would be laughable were it not for the *Hindutva* movement's success in spreading these "teaching materials" among the U.S. Indian Diaspora through after-school and day care programs. Teachers, too, are eager for supplemental materials to use in the classroom, especially if they are low-cost or provided for free; California teachers have clearly been exposed to *Hindutva* materials, as have teachers in Texas. At a University of Texas Title VI "Hemispheres" Outreach Workshop with K-12 schoolteachers this summer, some teachers from Houston area schools, perhaps drawing upon similar anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States, passionately argued that since Hindus were the original inhabitants of India, minority populations there should be treated like immigrant foreigners. Thus, regardless of how challenges to state-adopted textbooks in Texas and Florida play out in the future, *Hindutva* propaganda continues to circulate and to make its way into U.S. classrooms.

Our recommendations to remedy this are twofold: (1) The U.S. government should increase the outreach and programming budgets for South Asia Title VI Programs with specially earmarked funds to hire additional staff to develop and widely disseminate academically vetted supplemental materials on Hinduism for use in U.S. classrooms. (2) Policymakers should consider whether a national panel of South Asia scholars drawn from federally funded Title VI South Asia programs should be created to vet controversial materials in the event of continued court challenges to state approved teaching materials on Hinduism in the United States.

Notes

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[1] See "The national curriculum framework in Gujarat—children's education in a Hindu Rashtra" Nandini Manjrekar, University of Baroda, April 5, 2002 (Material submitted to the Editors' Guild of India), People's Union for Civil Liberties, Baroda and Shanti Abhiyan.

[2] See "The Need for Strengthening Education Change" J.B. Rajput, *Pioneer*, November 20, 2002.

[3] For an analysis of Hindu Americans post-9/11, see also Prema A. Kurien, "Multiculturalism and 'American' Religion: The Case of Hindu Indian Americans" *Social Forces* 85, no. 2 (December 2006): 723-741.

[4] See for example the numerous human rights reports on the 2002 *Sangh Parivar* violence against Muslims in Gujarat: "An Interim Report to the National Human Rights Commission,"People's Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL), March 21, 2002 (http://www.pucl.org); "Ethnic Cleansing in Ahmedabad: A Preliminary Report," SAHMAT Fact Finding Team, March 10-12, 2002: (http://www.mnet.fr/aiindex/sahmatreport032002.html); "Interim Report of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), April 1, 2002: (http://www.nhrc.nic.in/); "The State Must Ensure Redress for the Victims: A Memo to the Government of Gujarat on its Duties in the Aftermath of the Violence," Amnesty International Report, March 28, 2002, Internet, http://www.mnet.fr/aiindex/amnestysGujaratreport.pdf; "Gujarat Carnage 2002: A Report to the Nation," Kamal Chenoy, et al. April 10, 2002 (http://www.mnet.fr/aiindex/GujCarnage.html); Human Rights Watch Report, "'We Have No Orders To Save You:' State Participation and Complicity in Communal Violence in Gujarat," April 30, 1992, Internet, http://hrw.org/reports/2002/india/.

[5] We must stress however, that while these are the main U.S. *Sangh*-affiliated organizations, there are numerous front organizations the *Sangh* uses to advance its agenda which also claim to be independent of the *Sangh*. In practice however, these apparently independent organizations have in key positions of leadership, prominent members of recognized U.S. *Sangh* organizations. The *Sangh Parivar* in India, as well as the U.S., also works through the strategy of placing its members in positions of leadership in local community or temple organizations. Two reports done by a group of scholars, The Campaign to Stop Funding Hate are important for meticulously documenting and tracing the links between *Sangh* and front organizations: "The Foreign Exchange of Hate: IDRF and the American Funding of Hindutva" available at http://stopfundinghate.org/sacw/index.html and "Unmistakably Sangh: The National Hindu Students Council and its Hindutva Agenda." Available online at http://hsctruthout.stopfundinghate.org/Report/iindex1.html. In addition, another important report done on *Sangh* charitable organizations in the UK, "IN BAD FAITH? BRITISH CHARITY & HINDU EXTREMISM" (Awaaz — South Asia Watch Ltd, 2004) available online at: http://www.awaazsaw.org/ibf/index.htm

[6] As one example, most indefinite detentions under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) were against Muslims while few if any violent members of the Hindu nationalist organizations were ever charged under this act. See for example, "The Terror of POTA and Other Security Legislation" Report of the People's Tribunal on the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Other Security legislation" New Delhi (March,2004). As a result of the overwhelming evidence of the use of POTA to harass the Muslim community, POTA was repealed by the Indian government when the Congress party came to power in 2004.

[7] While the idea of Hindutva may have first come into circulation in the late 19th century, V.D. Savarkar, a former RSS member implicated in the plot to assassinate Gandhi, first systematized it in his 1926 political treatise, Hindutva. See Chetan Bhatt, Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths (Oxford: Berg), 2001.

[8] http://www.ercwilcom.net/indowindow/sad/article.php?child=29&article=28 (date accessed: 6 December 2005).

[9] See Mridula Mukherjee and Aditya Mukherjee, " The Communalisation of Education and the History Textbook Controversy: An Overview: in THE COMMUNALISATION EDUCATION

THE HISTORY TEXTBOOK CONTROVERSY: AN OVERVIEW" The Delhi Historian's Group (Delhi, 2002) p. 1.

[10] United States Department of State, "International Religious Freedom Reports—India (2002-2004)" http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/ (date accessed: 5 December 2005).

[11] See National Council of Educational Research and Training, *National Curriculum Framework* (2000), 35, 13.

[12] "Social Science Textbook" for Std. IX, 94.

[13] http://www.indiatogether.org/2007/feb/edu-gujtexts.htm#continue (date accessed: 5 October 2008).

[14] See also the forthcoming Nirantar study of History textbooks in Five States. This study has been conceptualized and coordinated by Nirantar a Centre of Gender and Education located in Delhi. The study covers West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh state textbooks. In addition to these states, nationally produced textbooks by NCERT and private publishers have also been studied. The Tamil Nadu Study was coordinated by Dr. V. Geetha, the West Bengal Study by Dr. Paromita Chakravarti, the Gujarat study by Dr. Nandini Manjrekar, and the Delhi Study by Dipta Bhog.

[15] See Casolari, Marzia. "Hindutva's Foreign Tie-Up in the 1930s: Archival Evidence." *Economic and Political Weekly*. January 22, 2000. Available online at http://www.sacw.net/DC/CommunalismCollection/ArticlesArchive/casolari.pdf

[16] See http://www.petitiononline.com/cedpra51/petition.html 11.

[17] THIS NEEDS TO BE CITED.

[18] THIS NEEDS TO BE CITED.

[19] See Apoorvanand, "Return of the Rightwing Textbook," *Tehelka,* 20 January 2007; available at http://www.sacw.net/HateEducation/apoorvJan07.html

[20] See Maria Glod, "Wiping Stereotypes of India off the books" Washington Post, Sunday, April 17, 2005; Page C07 http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A59613-2005Apr16.html (date accessed 26 October 2008). See also copies of Fairfax County School Board Meeting Minutes, March 31, 2005 on file with authors Witzel and Visweswaran.

[21] See the Campaign to Stop Funding Hate Report on the Hindu Student Council "Unmistakably Sangh: The National Hindu Students Council and its Hindutva Agenda"
http://hsctruthout.stopfundinghate.org/Report/ch2.html#4 accessed on 10/26/08

[22] http://www.eshiusa.org/NL-vol1_030805.htm (date accessed: 26 October 2008).

[23] Bajpai is one of the founders of WAVES (World association for Vedic Studies), www.hindunet.org/hindu_history/ancient/indus/waves.html; see report at: http://www.indiadivine.org/audarya/vedic-culture/189265-abstracts-1st-waves-conference.html

[24] THIS NEEDS TO BE CITED.

[25] THIS NEEDS TO BE CITED.

[26] http://www.southasiafaculty.net/catext/letters/Indologists_CBE1.pdf

[27] THIS NEEDS TO BE CITED.

[28] http://southasiafaculty.net/catext/letters/FacultyCBELetter1.pdf

[29] http://southasiafaculty.net/catext/letters/FacultyCBELetter2.pdf

[30] On January 6, 2006, the Curriculum Commission asked Professors Shiva Bajpai (Northridge) and Michael Witzel (Harvard) to debate for six hours, each one of the 160-odd proposed changes in an attempt to resolve the issue. Agreement could easily

be reached on obvious errors and insensitive statements, but not on the four major points of contention (the Vedic four varna system and low caste status of Dalits, the status and role of women in India, the construction of a monolithic monotheistic Hinduism, and Aryan "invasion" or migration).

[31] These included the Ambedkar Center for Justice and Peace, the Indian Buddhist Association of America, New Republic India, and Californian Dalit Sikh temples such as the Guru Ravi Dass Gurdwara, Federation of Tamil Sangams in North America, Non Resident Indians for a Secular and Harmonious India, the Vaishnava Center for Enlightenment, and the Indian American Public Education Advisory Council as well as the Friends of South Asia (FOSA), and the Coalition against Communalism (CAC).

[32] These were 1) Problems in Identifying Hinduism with Ancient India: Hinduism is a plural tradition, 2) Problems identifying Ancient India with Sanskrit: Dual classical traditions in north and south India, 3) Hinduism and the Caste System, 4) Women and Hinduism, 5) Other Important Beliefs of Hinduism: "Ahimsa" (non-violence). See http://southasiafaculty.net/catext/files/Faculty_overview.pdf; pp. 3-5; Title VI Committee, "Biogenetic Data and Historical Scholarship: Sources of Evidence Regarding 'Aryan Migration,'" Title VI Centers Report (presentation, California State Board of Education, Sacramento, CA, February 27, 2006), Internet, http://southasiafaculty.net/catext/files/Faculty_biogenetics.pdf.

[33] See Internet, http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Indo-Eurasian_research/message/4861; original ruling no longer available on the court website http://www.saccourt.com/courtrooms/trulings/d19archives/

[34] See http://www.capeem.org/

[35] *Rg Veda*,10.90.12.

[36] In conflating "ancient civilizations" with the emergence of Hinduism in India, the California textbooks also left no room to discuss Tamil literature, the other Indian classical literary tradition besides Sanskrit.

[37] The formation in question is actually geological in nature and is about 17 million years old; Hindu nationalists believe the "bridge" was built 3,500 years ago to allow Ram to cross from India to Sri Lanka to defeat Ravana. See http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article1572638.ece (date accessed: 27 October 2008).